

Natural Resources Advisory Board

January 11, 2010

Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Emken called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. Roll call was given and quorum was met.

Roll Call/Introductions:

Claudia Emken	Dick Wren	Gene Abbott
Dennis Ferrell	Larry Lucas	Pat Kernan
Joe Pearson		

DNR Staff:

Marc Miller	Deborah Stone	Tim Schweizer
Tom Dilello	Mick Rosendahl	Dave Sellman
Jan Nation	Sue Eubanks	Debbie Bruce
Tami Evans		

A motion to adopt the January 11, 2010 agenda was provided by Joe Pearson with Larry Lucas providing the second. No opposition was heard.

A motion to accept the June 25, 2009 advisory board minutes was provided by Dennis Ferrell with Dick Wren providing the second. No opposition was heard.

Director Miller welcomed and thanked the board for attending the January 11, 2010 meeting.

Conservation Congress was a tremendous success; opening the lines of communication and working together with our partners is important. One of the most important discussions and suggestions was to explore dedicated funding. Working together with NRAB, we should explore ways to accomplish this goal in the future. It's promising, but this will be a tough year to move forward.

Claudia added that on January 22 Partners for Parks & Wildlife will be hosting discussions at Wildlife Prairie Park with Trust for Public Land to learn about the research that is being done, and that continues to be done relative to funding since Conservation Congress. The meeting will be at Wildlife Prairie Park in Peoria.

Boat Grants – Mick Rosendahl – Board members were provided a summary packet of the FY10 Boat Access grant applications for their review. The Department received fifteen applications; \$725,000 is available for funding. Mick explained the criteria needed to receive a grant from the Boat Access Area

Development program, and explained that smaller projects in the smaller communities typically don't rank well because there is not enough launching areas. Director Miller said it is disconcerting and should be looked at in the future. Mick added that he could reach out to the smaller communities who do apply and provide them with guidance on future applications. Grants staff recommended that projects 1-6 receive funding. Joe Pearson motioned to approve staff recommendations of projects 1-6; Larry Lucas provided the second. Motion carried, no opposition was heard.

OSLAD-Grants/Claudia – Mick thanked that Board for the time and commitment they put into the OSLAD process this year. Claudia, Joe Pearson and Dale Stewart presided over the OSLAD hearings in October. 59 communities were invited to Springfield to present their projects; \$17 million is available in funding this year. The committee recommended a list of 49 projects, in rank order with another 10 projects listed as alternates should additional funding become available. Joe Pearson provided a motion to accept and approve the committee's recommendation of projects 1-49 as presented including the recommended alternates; Larry Lucas provided the second. Motion carried, no opposition was heard. Claudia encouraged the Board to participate in OSLAD hearings in the future as they are interesting and informative. Dick Wren thanked the Grants staff for their continued hard work and professionalism.

CREP – Debbie Bruce – CREP- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program started in 1998 as a partnership between the Federal government, local units of government and a number of state agencies to help restore flooded areas in the Illinois River basin to increase habitat and wildlife and reduce sedimentation. Thru 2007 the state has invested over \$61 million dollars in CREP and over 136,000 acres have been restored in the Illinois River basin, including large corridors of riparian habitat, 30,000 acres of wetland areas, and 40,000 natural native grass prairies. The program had been unfunded until the passing of the capital budget in 2009. The budget allows for \$45 million to re-open the program, possibly expand into the Kaskaskia River basin and ultimately its hope is to go statewide. The process is taking a little longer than anticipated but DNR is continually working with Washington, USDA and County SWCD offices to move forward and have the program running by April 1.

Conservation Congress – Next Step – Deborah Stone – Deborah provided the Board with copies of Conservation Congress's Executive Summary and full report. Approximately 140 individuals attended Conservation Congress with a lot of interest, great ideas and suggestions. It is DNR's intent to work with some of its key partners to see what could be worked on immediately. Larry Lucas asked if there was a number set for permanent funding. Claudia added no, but something that would allow DNR to be independent; a package of options may need to be looked at. Marc added that it would be nice to get back into the \$90 million range. Joe asked if the Agency has looked for or applied for any type of grant funding. Marc added that the ICF can be an option but at this time there is not an Executive Director. A Conservation Congress follow up is scheduled for April 13.

2010 Advisory Board Dates – The board selected Tuesday, April 6, Tuesday, June 29 and Tuesday, October 26. OSLAD hearings will be scheduled sometime the first week of October.

No public comments were heard.

Board Comments – Joe suggested having some one look at all Foundations, see what their mission is and find out what kind of funding sources are available. As a Board we should be looking at ways to find private funding for the Department. Claudia asked Dick if the Foundation actively seeks money for DNR or do they focus on hosting events to raise money. Dick added that the ICF is always seeking money for the Agency. The ICF does not have a full time employee to seek out grant money, and the ICF Executive Director seat is empty.

Pat Kernan asked that this Board address why or why not we don't look at allowing crossbow hunting especially for youth at the next board meeting. It's been brought up before but the issue is never addressed.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.